

New York (City) Knoedler. M. & Co.

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**The
Parsifal
Tone Pictures**



Marcus-Simons

On View at the Galleries of
M. Knoedler & Co.
355 Fifth Avenue, N. Y.
From Saturday, January 16th, on

1904

61142

The Story of Parsifal

The Growth of Pity in a Human Soul

GAMURET, the father of Parsifal, was killed in battle. To save her son from the same fate, Herzeleide, his mother, reared the boy in a wild, unknown country, in total ignorance of the world and its struggles. The warlike instinct was strong in the child, however, and he made for himself a bow and arrows.

One day, while hunting in the woods, he met three men on horseback. They seemed to him beautiful in their glittering armor. He asked them who they were and whence they came. But the Knights only laughed and rode away.

Then Parsifal forgot his home, his mother—everything. His whole life was absorbed in one idea, the finding of those Knights.

After weeks and weeks of fruitless search, the simple-minded lad, without knowing it, reached the lands of the Holy Grail. Here Wagner's drama commences.

Parsifal, wandering in the woods on the borders of a lake, sees grave and stately men walking about, robed in long mantles, marked on the left shoulder with the emblem of a white dove. Their appearance both astonishes and attracts him; when suddenly a swan, rising from the waters, awakens his hunter's instincts. Bending his bow, he sends an arrow whizzing through the air. He is immediately seized and brought before an aged man—half knight, half esquire—who, instead of punishing the culprit, asks him his name and whence he comes.—“That know I not,” replies the youth. Gurnemanz reproaches him for his cruelty, and, picking up the blood-stained bird, draws the attention of its slayer to his victim's anguished look.

McGadden
gift
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Touched by an entirely new emotion, the youth breaks his bow and arrows. The solemn sound of distant bells is heard. And Gurnemanz, taking Parsifal by the arm, leads him away. Walking, as in a dream, Parsifal watches the landscape move past him. Little by little the forest trees give place to mighty boulders. These, in turn, change to massive halls hewn out of the living rock. The bells grow louder, and Parsifal at last finds himself with his guide in a great vaulted basilica, lighted from a dome. In the centre of the building stands an altar. From right and left come knights arrayed as the men whom he had once seen among the trees. Their brows are circled round with linen bands. Four of them bear in, on a couch, a man clad like themselves, who seems to be their King. These are followed by three youths carrying a veiled shrine, which they place on the altar. The knights, seating themselves before the altar at two semi-circular tables, cry in unison: "Amfortas! Amfortas! Uncover the Holy Grail!"

But the King answers: "No, I cannot. I am unworthy, for I am a sinner. I have loved sin, and I am tortured with desire." As he speaks, he points to a wound which bleeds in his breast, and seems to feel terrible agony.

Then, in the depths of the basilica, a strange, unearthly voice is heard exclaiming: "Amfortas! Amfortas! Unhappy sinner, do thy office, though thou suffer. Shall I again see the Grail to-day and live? Or must I die denied the Saviour's blood?"—"Father, father," comes the answer of the King, "do thou once more officiate and let me die!"

Again the solemn voice exclaims: "In the tomb I live, through the Saviour's grace. Too feeble am I now to serve. Do thou thy duty and atone for thy sin! Uncover the Grail!"

Although pale with awe, Amfortas obeys. He bids his acolytes remove the veil that enshrouds the shrine. A crystal cup is thus revealed. Taking it in his hands,

Amfortas raises it, making the sign of the Cross as he replaces it upon the altar. The liquid in the cup begins to glow as a mysterious gloom pervades the hall. A crimson light soon radiates from the vessel. The knights bow their heads in prayer, and voices from above sing: "Take of My blood, take of My body. This do in remembrance of Me." The acolytes then distribute loaves of bread to the knights and fill their cups with wine from great golden ewers. Meanwhile, the King sinks back upon his couch. The light of day returns, and the knights go, as they had come, bearing away Amfortas and preceded by the Shrine, with the sacred Cup. Throughout the scene, Parsifal has stood mute and motionless. Gurnemanz asks him harshly if he understands what he has seen; and when the youth shakes his head negatively, the old esquire thrusts him out in anger, saying: "Then art thou nothing but a fool! Leave thou our swans in future in peace, and seek for thyself, thou gander, a goose." But from the dome, a voice is heard, singing the mystic promise:

"By pity enlightened, a guileless fool—

Wait, wait for him, my chosen tool."

What Parsifal had not understood, is unfolded to us in the course of Wagner's music-drama. The Holy Grail is the Cup which Christ used at the Last Supper and in which Joseph of Arimathea received His Blood at the foot of the Cross. After the death of the Saviour, angels had taken it up to Heaven, together with the Spear with which Longinus pierced Christ's side. Later, they had confided them to a sainted knight named Titurel, who founded the Order of the Grail to guard the treasures. As Titurel has grown old and feeble, his son Amfortas has succeeded him. From the precious Cup and from the blessed Spear flow vivifying strength and wondrous virtues.

Already, however, a redoubtable enemy is plotting the ruin of the Grail knights. The pagan Klingsor was once ambitious to rule the saintly brotherhood, admis-

sion to which was denied all who were not chaste and pure. Being unable to curb his passions, he was repulsed and has vowed vengeance upon the knights. An adept in all the occult sciences and a great magician, he has caused a magnificent Moorish castle to arise in the vicinity of the Grail Temple and filled its gardens with beautiful sirens, like unto tropical flowers, to allure the knights, who, if seduced, were lost to the Grail and to its holy mission. Amfortas had fought his evil foe with the sacred Spear, which gives victory. But Klingsor had opposed to him a woman of entrancing beauty, and Amfortas had succumbed to her charms. As Amfortas lay in her arms, Klingsor seized the lance and dealt him with it an incurable wound. The Spear is now in Klingsor's hand. The Grail is in danger. The knights are terrified, and their King suffers the agony of vain remorse. "By pity enlightened, a guileless fool—Wait, wait for him, my chosen tool," is the only hope that the Grail offers in answer to his prayers. Parsifal, seeming such a fool, was believed by Gurnemanz to be the coming healer. Disappointed in his hope, the old man has thrust him out into the world to become a prey to the temptations which lie in wait for him.

In the second act of the music-drama, we are in the enchanted castle, at the summit of a tower. Klingsor, looking in a large magical mirror, in which he sees all that is going on in the world, commences an incantation. "Out of the abyss, come to me! Your master calls! She-Devil! Rose of Hell! Herodias once wast thou—Kundry now thou art!" As he speaks, a woman rises from the depths, bathed in blue light. Under the spell, she writhes; uttering shrieks of demoniacal woe, mingled with laughter.

Who is this strange creature? In times gone by she was that Herodias who mocked at Christ on his way to Golgotha, and who was condemned for this to eternal, hellish laughter. She can only be saved by the

pity of a pure human love. She seems to have two souls and two lives. In one phase of her being, nothing can satisfy her desires: she possesses all the witchery of the most seductive love. But no sooner is her aim attained, than her devilish laughter scoffs at her victim and reveals her own torment. She it was who, at the bidding of Klingsor, had seduced Amfortas. In the other phase of her dual existence, Kundry craves to serve the good. She roams the world in search of healing balsams for the suffering Amfortas. Dressed like a wild gypsy, half nude, a snake entwining her scant garments, she seeks to atone. Her efforts, however, are useless. When the hour comes, the watchful Klingsor puts her to sleep, only to awaken her to some new mission of lust and damnation. It is one of these errands which Kundry now endeavors to evade, as the magician sees from afar, through the window of the tower, a new victim—a pure (Parsi) innocent (Fal) youth. A dangerous smile lights up Kundry's face. She is awake. "The boy is beautiful, and he draws near," exclaims Klingsor. Kundry, laughing in exultation, vanishes.

We are in the enchanted garden. The frightened flower-maidens call to each other and rush about, like bees swarming in a disturbed beehive. Their knight-lovers, who have opposed the coming of Parsifal, have been conquered by the youth who now stands facing them. Seeing that he does not harm them, they laugh and gather round him, asking him to play with them, as they cling to him with caressing and entwining arms. Suddenly the voice of Kundry is heard crying: "Parsifal, Fal Parsi!" Reclining in all her loveliness on a bed of flowers, she appears to the hero's astonished gaze. She recalls to him the kisses of his mother, the sad Herzeleide, and she describes that mother's death of sorrow at his flight. Parsifal falls on his knees in an agony of regret. Then Kundry, throwing her arms around his neck, gives him a long, passionate kiss.

But Parsifal, rising with a wild cry, exclaims: "The wound, the wound! It is the wound that burns in my breast. This is the voice that called him. This is the look which enthralled him—the waving curls—the lips that gave the accursed kiss! Away from me! The Saviour's lamentation I distinguished, His lamentation for the polluted Sanctuary. And I—oh, fool, oh, coward, hither fled! Redeemer, Saviour, Gracious Lord, what can retrieve my crime abhorred?" Kundry renews her temptation, but Parsifal repels her and implores her to seek God's salvation. Only by helping him to redeem Amfortas and save the Grail can she herself be redeemed. Let her show him the forgotten road that leads to the Temple.

"One single hour with me," answers the enchantress, "and the longed-for path thou shalt straight-forward see. He who once by my kiss was lost did give me wisdom! And against thyself I will direct the Spear, should thy pity go to the sinner. Pity, pity! Only one hour, and I will show thee the way!" She enfolds him with her arms, only to be again repelled. And, in a frenzy, she calls Klingsor to her assistance. At her summons, the magician appears, holding the Holy Spear in his hands. "Halt!" he cries. "The right way is lost to thee! Thus do I curse thee, fool, with the Master's Spear."

And Klingsor hurls the weapon at Parsifal.

But the lance remains suspended in mid-air, and Parsifal, clutching it, describes the sign of the Cross. "Thus do I exorcise thy power. The wound thou mad'st shalt yet be healed. Crumble to ruin, all thy vain display."

In an instant the magic castle, the gardens and the sirens who have clustered around Klingsor vanish, leaving but a desert waste, while Parsifal, turning to the still defiant Kundry, says: "Thou know'st where only we shall meet again."

The enchantress sinks to the earth, uttering a shriek of despairing agony.

Act III.

This brings us to the third act. It opens as an idyll of peace. We are in a meadow stretching far away in the direction of the hidden Temple. Between moss-grown stones runs a spring of pure water. Gurnemanz, the old follower of Titurel, has turned hermit. Issuing from his hut, he hears moans, and discovers Kundry asleep among the brambles. Of the dual nature of Kundry he knows nothing. But, having found her thus, he tries to revive her. She is sad and humble. She wears a long brown robe, bound about her waist by a rope. In response to his questions, she merely murmurs the words, "Service, service." Lifting an urn, she fills it at the spring.

Suddenly, she points to a knight in black armor, who enters slowly, his visor closed, his lance dipped low. The knight makes no answer to the inquiries of Gurnemanz, until he is told that he has entered the realm of the Grail, where none may walk armed. At these words, the knight plants his lance in the ground, and, uncovering his face, looks up in fervent prayer, his eyes fixed upon the upright weapon. Gurnemanz and Kundry recognize Parsifal and the Spear. They know that the holy weapon is redeemed.

In a transport of joy, they await the close of his prayer. Then Gurnemanz tells him of the sadness of the world. Amfortas suffers more and more at each uncovering of the Grail—he has even refused to perform his office, hoping thus to die. Titurel is already dead, and the knights languish in grief.

"Alas, alas!" cries Parsifal. "Too late have I found the way." He totters as if he would fall. "Not so," says Gurnemanz as he helps him to the spring and unlaces his armor, while Kundry, throwing herself at his feet, washes and dries them with her hair, like the Magdalen. She pours precious oil upon his feet and wipes them. She hands the balsam to Parsifal, who, bending, kisses her on the eyes, and, taking water

from the spring, baptizes her, as Gurnemanz anoints him King.

Lifting his gaze, Parsifal beholds the fields glowing with new-opened flowers. He is astonished at the fresh charm of nature, which never, until then, has so appealed to him. Old Gurnemanz explains: "This is Good Friday's spell, my lord. The sad, repentant tears of sinners have here, with holy rain, besprinkled field and plain."

The pealing of bells is now heard, mingling with the solemn strains of a funeral dirge. Parsifal, escorted by Gurnemanz, and followed by the drooping figure of Kundry, re-enters the hall of the Holy Grail. Robed in the mantle of royalty, he finds the knights surrounding the corpse of Titurel. In vain do they implore Amfortas to uncover the Grail. In the throes of his anguish he refuses. Tearing open his garments, he reveals his wound, and implores all to slay him and thus end his torture.

Then Parsifal touches Amfortas' breast with the point of the Sacred Spear, and lo ! the wound at last is healed.

Ascending the steps of the altar, Parsifal takes the Holy Grail and lifts it high above his head, blessing the hall and the now kneeling knights, as a white dove descends from the dome.

Kundry, with one last look at Parsifal, sinks dead at his feet, redeemed by divine pity and love. And, as Parsifal traces in the air the sign of the Cross, while the choir sings from above, "Redemption to the redeemer," the music-drama ends.

THE PARSIFAL EXHIBITION.

IT is to the efforts and influence of Mr. Roland Knoedler we owe the present exhibition of the "Parsifal" Tone-Pictures. Mr. Marcius-Simons, who for the past ten years has been accumulating material for the realization of his great series of paintings illustrating the entire "Nibelungen Ring", was loth to separate "Parsifal" from its place in the vast scheme. One of his reasons for this reluctance was that, in Wagner's mind, the Holy Grail was nothing but "the treasure of the Nibelungs idealized" or spiritualized, as it were, by Christian thought. Wagner writes, "As the gold—the Ring—is the central motive around which the whole Cycle moves, so is the Grail in 'Parsifal' ". "The search for the Grail replaces now the fight for the gold", and the Master adds, "The voice that comes from Titurel's tomb, is but the voice of Wotan, in whose soul the will of life is destroyed". And to emphasize more clearly the parallelism between Bruennhilde and Kundry (who, like Bruennhilde, rides a magic horse) Wagner gave her in one episode the name of Gundryggia, which signifies Walkuere, or Valkyr.

Mr. Knoedler argued that the "Ring" series—a mighty work in itself, including twenty or more paintings—did not need this climax, which would be interesting only to the students of Wagner literature. Moreover, he pointed out that the mystical side of "Parsifal" would be made more impressive by a separate presentation. At last Mr. Marcius-Simons yielded. But the four paintings of the great religious drama in the "Ring" series were judged, after consideration, insufficient for a separate art display, and it was decided that they should be supplemented by four upright panels, typifying the five characters of the drama, while serving as connecting links in the telling of the story. The affinity between the ideals of Richard Wagner and the painting of Marcius-Simons

has long been recognized in Europe. The painter, like the musician, claims to be but a poet, using his art merely as a means of expressing ideas.

To our modern mind, especially to the northern mind, music (thanks to Wagner) and literature are the greatest arts. We are not moved, as the ancients were, by mere plastic perfection. Behind the painting, statue, portrait or even the score, we seek the thought, the soul, before admiring the way in which the thought is carried out, or the mere execution of detail. The ideas expressed by Michael Angelo in the Sistine Chapel, the thoughts that lurk behind the enigmatical smile of da Vinci's Mona Lisa, are more to us than the beauty of execution of the works themselves; a beauty faded by time, destroyed in many details which would not, had they alone existed, have assured these works their everlasting fame.

Marcus-Simons believes that the wonderful freedom that the Master of Bayreuth has given to music can be equally realized in the sister art of painting, and that the palette and brush can also give to the present generation what it demands as a condition of greatness in every art—food for thought. Painting, like music, should commence when all other arts purporting to express an idea or a vision fail. "*L'art commence, ou la nature finit.*"

We talk of the wonderful possibilities of modern music, of the unheard of combinations obtained with the seven notes of the scale. Why should not a painter paint, as a musician scores? Marcus-Simons does this.

We are astounded at the polyphony of the modern orchestra. Why not give the same prominence and power of expression to the polychromy of the palette?

Do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, si—are the seven factors of music. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet are the factors in painting.

Wagner has proved that the power of expression in music has no limit. Why should that same power be limited in painting? In a picture, every item should be studied with a purpose, and it should be impossible to imagine a work, once finished, as otherwise conceived, if intended to express the same idea.

For example, take the "Seats of the Mighty" of Marcius-Simons. (It is now in England). Suppress the birds of prey, small as they appear, hovering around the castle stronghold, and the idea of the work is in part lost. The same may be said of the sunset in the "Notte del Giorno" (owned in the United States) as it shines on the domes of San Marco and the ruins of the Campanile.

We have briefly embodied some of Mr. Marcius-Simons' ideas, as to what it was necessary to retain or omit in the composition of his "Parsifal" pictures in order to help the public, without too prolonged a study, to enter more fully into the spirit in which they were conceived and realized. Assiduous examination will bring to light details too numerous to mention.

One of the considerations which induced the artist to consent to the separation of the "Parsifal" pictures from the "Ring" series, thus enabling Mr. Roland Knoedler to exhibit the former without awaiting the completion of the entire work—was that the music of "Parsifal" is so different in spirit and conception from that of the great Cycle, that he found almost insuperable difficulty in the execution of the paintings as a harmonious whole. Another difficulty was, that, of necessity, the pictures embodied several episodes of the music-drama in one single presentation, and that each of them has to give at a glance, so to speak, the vision of what happens in a long half hour or more upon the stage.

The Parsifal Tone-paintings

Gurnemanz.

"Die Erzählung". (*The Narrative*).

When the curtain is withdrawn on the stage at Bayreuth, Gurnemanz and two youths are discovered lying asleep under a tree. They wake and the drama opens with a morning prayer. Later in the act, Gurnemanz tells, in a long recitative, the story of the Grail—which is of great importance, as it unfolds to us all that has taken place before the drama commences.

In the corresponding painting, both these episodes have been welded together. One of the youths, kneeling still, seems to be finishing the prayer: while the other listens in wonderment to the story the oldesquire is reciting. In the distance, we see the Gralsburg and the waters of the lake, on which float two swans, thus foreshadowing the coming action of "Parsifal". In the drama, Kundry, in her wild disguise, is on the stage, when the story is told, as are two of the esquires. But her appearance, as well as theirs, in the picture, would detract from the typical character of the title, and the whole composition would no longer recall to the spectator the impressive and beautiful opening strains of the music inscribed below the painting.

II.

The Blood of Christ.

"Wie hell gruesst uns heute der Herr!"

The Communion, or Love Feast, episode in the first act is perhaps the most impressive in the whole drama. As a foreground, and to enable him to introduce the figure of Kundry, the artist has used the moving scenery through which Parsifal passes as he walks towards the pealing bells with Gurnemanz. In the Temple itself, Marcius-Simons has adhered to

the lines and disposition of Bayreuth. It was his purpose to give—not so much a presentation of the Wagnerstadt performances which would enable any one who had been there, to recognize “Parsifal” immediately, but rather a lasting memento of how Wagner himself saw the stage pictures and wished them to be seen. The decorative details of this hall, which is shown three times in the series, change, however, suiting themselves to the moods of occurring events. In the first Temple picture, the whole centre is a mosaic of gold which recalled—when the painting formed part of the “Ring” series---the gold of the Nibelung treasure, replaced now by the Grail, whose effulgence floods the whole architecture with crimson rays.

The *leitmotif* underlying Parsifal is the Pure-Fool *motif*, characterizing his present personality; while in the figure of Kundry, the *Wildheit*, the Wild *motif*, expresses the phase of her dual existence when she roams around the Gralsburg seeking to serve. Her attitude, shading her eyes to see better, alludes to her recognition of Parsifal—which, in reality, takes place after the death of the swan. The central *motif* is the Gral *motif*, as it appears in the orchestra, when Amfortas replaces the Grail upon the altar.

III.

Kundry and Klingsor.

Die Beschwörung. (*The Incantation*).

In this upright canvas, we see Kundry writhing under the spell of the magician and uttering her weird shriek of woe, mixed with hellish laughter, which is her famous *motif*. She appears in all her radiant beauty, an evil smile faintly discernible on her lips, as she wakes against her will to her mission of seductive devilry. The brown serpent-girdled robe—the livery of the wild phase of her double life—falls from her limbs.

The *leitmotifs* inscribed below this panel are, naturally, Kundry's shriek and the Klingsor *motif*, which appear in the orchestration, as the magician cries; "Herauf! Zu mir! Dein Meister ruft!"

IV.

Klingsor's Magic Garden.

Die Blumenmädchen. (The Flower-Maidens).

This was, perhaps, one of the most difficult compositions to condense. The occurrences of a long act are compressed into one single picture. The attitude of Parsifal, his features expressing the sadness of the Gralstrauer, which has suddenly come to him, was not easy to create, as Wagner explains that, in "Parsifal," the struggle is purely a mental one. Until Wagner came, its realization in music seemed equally difficult.

Kundry's appearance as she sings the sad strains of the Herzeleide theme is so touching and in such pictorial contrast to her wild aspect in the first act, and to her personification of the Magdalen in the last act, that the artist, in fact, had no choice but to paint her as she is seen on the stage. Her cries and stormy attitudes, later on, when repulsed by "Parsifal," would have recalled the figure in the preceding picture.

Klingsor, amidst the flowers on the extreme right, poising the Sacred Lance, stained with Christ's Blood, ready to hurl the weapon at "Parsifal," with the bleak mountains in the background, suggests the closing scene of the "Zauberei"—the magical episode in the drama.

The celebrated Kose *motif* of the Flower-Maidens is naturally the central one below the picture. Beneath Klingsor is the ascending scale of the flight of the Spear. Below Kundry might have been put the Thor *motif*, on which she utters the call, "Parsi Fal, Fal Parsi!" But the claims of Herzeleide, of which she sings without leaving her couch, were paramount.

V.

Parsifal.

Der heilige Speer. (The Sacred Lance).

The next painting shows us Parsifal, after his long search for the Grail—indicated, in the landscape, by the far-stretching wilderness of arid mountains and rock-strewn path. The magic garden picture is thus, as it were, framed by Kundry, on one side, and on the other, by Parsifal. They are the great actors in the tragic struggle for the defense and victory of a soul. The sun has just burst through the clouds behind the Gralsburg, which stands at last revealed.

The only *leitmotif* is, of course, the Parsifal *motif*; but as it is heard in the third act, when Parsifal plants the Spear in the ground.

VI.

Good Friday's Spell.

Der Charfreitagzauber.

Several successive actions of the characters are, in this important picture, synthetized in a single group. Kundry, after washing and drying with her hair the feet of Parsifal, is handing him the phial of perfumed oil, while he contemplates the flowering meadow and Gurnemanz baptizes him before anointing him King. To the left is seen a hermit's hut of branches, which shape themselves on the roof somewhat in the form of a cross. In the far distance gleam the waters of the lake, already seen in the Gurnemanz picture. And the Gralsburg rises glorious, in the light of a rainbow—the sign of promise—shining through the vanishing clouds.

Beneath the group is the Parsifal *motif*—this time in broad and majestic coloring—and the Dienst *motif* of Kundry, which marks her last transformation. In the centre is the Charfreitag *motif*; to the left, the beautiful "Blumenaue" *motif*, best known to the general public as the wonderful "Good Friday's Spell" music.

VII.

Amfortas.

Die Heilung. (The Healing).

We return to Amfortas; whom we have already seen in the second painting, writhing on his couch of pain. He has refused to uncover the Grail. Tearing open his garments, he has exposed his wound and implored the knights to kill him and end his misery. Parsifal touches the wound with the Sacred Lance. Amfortas, in the agony of repentant grief, contemplates the divine blood which flows upon the point of the sacred weapon.

And here we call attention to an artistic idea which is most typical and clear in its purpose, in its assimilation of painting to a musical score, as conceived by Wagner. Wagner used the musical melody of a *Leit-motif* to indicate what was passing in the mind of the human being—thoughts completely different from the words uttered at the time. In the picture before us, the grief, the remorse, of Amfortas only are depicted in the figure; but, in the decoration of the hall, we find the flower maidens; indicating that the remembrance of his seduction and his fall must torture him as he contemplates the Blood of the Saviour so long desecrated by his impure hands.

The grief-stricken *motif* of Amfortas is inscribed beneath the picture.

VIII.

The Redeemer.

Der Erlæser.

The magnificent ending of a magnificent score. It needs no description.

The celestial and invisible choir heard in this scene is rendered comprehensible to the eye by the ethereal figures of Angels worshipping the Holy Blood. For a like purpose, the corpse of Titurel is seen lying stark and cold, on the bier. On the stage, when "Parsifal"

makes the sign of the Cross, Titurel lifts himself up for an instant—brought to life again by the sight of the Holy Grail. Had Titurel been painted thus, it would have been impossible to convey the impression of his death, as, owing to the unavoidable disposition of the hall, his back only could have been seen. There is no suggestion in the drama as to how Kundry is to die. Except in the words "she sinks to the ground, her gaze fixed on Parsifal." With marvellous inspiration, the artist makes her lie upon the altar steps, in the form of a cross. At last she finds the Saviour's look, which she has so long sought to meet in a lover's eyes. The closing strains of the music-drama, combining the Thor and the Abendmahl *motifs*, form the written comment on the last painting in the series.

Many lovely episodes of the drama have, perforce, been omitted in the pictorial rendering of the score. The celebrated entrance of Parsifal with the oft repeated "Das weiss ich nicht!" which establishes in such masterful manner his mentality; that gem of poetical pathos, the funeral march of the dead Swan; the procession of the youths, solemnly bearing in the veiled shrine; the changing of the flower maidens to withered leaves and branches, lying amidst the ruins of Klingsor's magic garden—all these, says Marcius-Simons, all these, would have made beautiful paintings. The artist's aim, however, was *not* the mere *illustration* of "Parsifal," but the interpretation of Wagner's score, in a series of tone-pictures comprising the chief events of the poem only,—the scenes, in which the drama soars to its full significance, while the music sends its remembrance to pulsate in every tone of the paintings.

THE SMALL PAINTINGS.

These sketches, which show how the larger works were at first conceived when they formed part of the "Ring" Series, are catalogued with appropriate titles to emphasize their character. These small paintings were begun and completed in Bayreuth.

No. 1.

The blood-red glow flooding the Grail Temple in the large canvas does not exist in this sketch. Neither is this effect produced on the stage of the Festspielhaus, although indicated in the score.

No. 2.

The greatest difference between the sketches and the large pictures exists, however, in the flower maidens. The necessity of studying out the figures here, to arrive at a complete mastery of the subject, compelled the artist to take as a working ground only a portion of the intended larger canvas, and, naturally, entailed the necessity of crowding the grouping and curtailing the landscape to a summary indication of its principal features. The sketch is most valuable, showing as it does, the divergencies between the original idea and the final rendering of the subject.

No. 3.

In the "Flower meadow" sketch one sees also how the picture was intended to form but one of a long series of others. The subject matter is condensed. In "The Sacred Lance and Parsifal" the armor alone suggests the knight-errant of the Festspielhaus stage. In the large painting, these uninteresting accessories were dispensed with, as Parsifal appears in full armor in the preceding upright pannel. The sky, with the clouds hiding the Gralsburg, was intended to suggest Parsifal's long and weary search for the Grail. The addition of the "Parsifal" panel enables Marcius-Simons to use this cloud effect only in the "Sacred Lance" picture and to introduce in the "Good-Friday's Spell" composition the rainbow, which emphasizes the meaning of the opening flowers.

No. 4.

There is no difference between this and the larger one. As it stands it was conceived and finished in Bayreuth.

(Signed)

MARCIUS-SIMONS.